

PHOENIX IRON COMPANY, FOUNDRY BUILDING
Pennsylvania Historic Bridges Recording Project - II
Main St. at Mill St.
Phoenixville
Chester County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-493-A

HAER
PA
15-PHOEN,
4A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
PHOENIX IRON COMPANY, FOUNDRY BUILDING

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Location: Main St. at Mill St., Phoenixville, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

USGS Quadrangle: Phoenixville, Pennsylvania (7.5-minute series, 1983).

UTM Coordinates: 18/455880/4442665

Date of Construction: 1882.

Designer: Amory Coffin.

Builder: Unknown.

Present Owner: Phoenixville Area Economic Development Corporation.

Present Use: Undergoing renovation into visitor's center.

Significance: Iron work began on the banks of French Creek in 1783 and continued, weathering massive changes in ferrous metalworking techniques, for 200 years. The foundry produced castings ancillary to the Phoenix Iron and Steel Company's main business as a manufacturer and fabricator of steel structures. Among these ancillary items were joint blocks used to connect the Phoenix columns of bridges erected by the Phoenix Bridge Company, a wholly owned engineering and fabrication subsidiary of the steel works.

Constructed in 1882, the foundry of the Phoenix Iron and Steel Company poured iron castings well into the 1970s. Truss work fabricated in the Phoenix Iron and Steel works using steel smelted and rolled in the Phoenix mills, supports the slate roof. The walls supporting the clerestory roof are rubble-core rough cut stone pierced by brick-trimmed windows and doors. The 8,000-square-foot pouring and molding floor was shaped by the requirements of casting. Integral equipment includes two cupolas, two core ovens, and four gantry cranes dedicated to moving sand molds and heavy castings around the sandy shop floor.

Historian: Ben A. Shackleford, August 1998.

PHOENIXVILLE IRON COMPANY, FOUNDRY BUILDING

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Project Description:

The Pennsylvania Historic Bridges Recording Project II was co-sponsored during the summer of 1998 by HABS/HAER under the general direction of E. Blaine Cliver, Chief; the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Bureau of Environmental Quality, Wayne W. Kober, Director; and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Brent D. Glass, Executive Director and State Historic Preservation Officer. The fieldwork, measured drawings, historical reports and photographs were prepared under the direction of Eric DeLony, Chief of HAER.